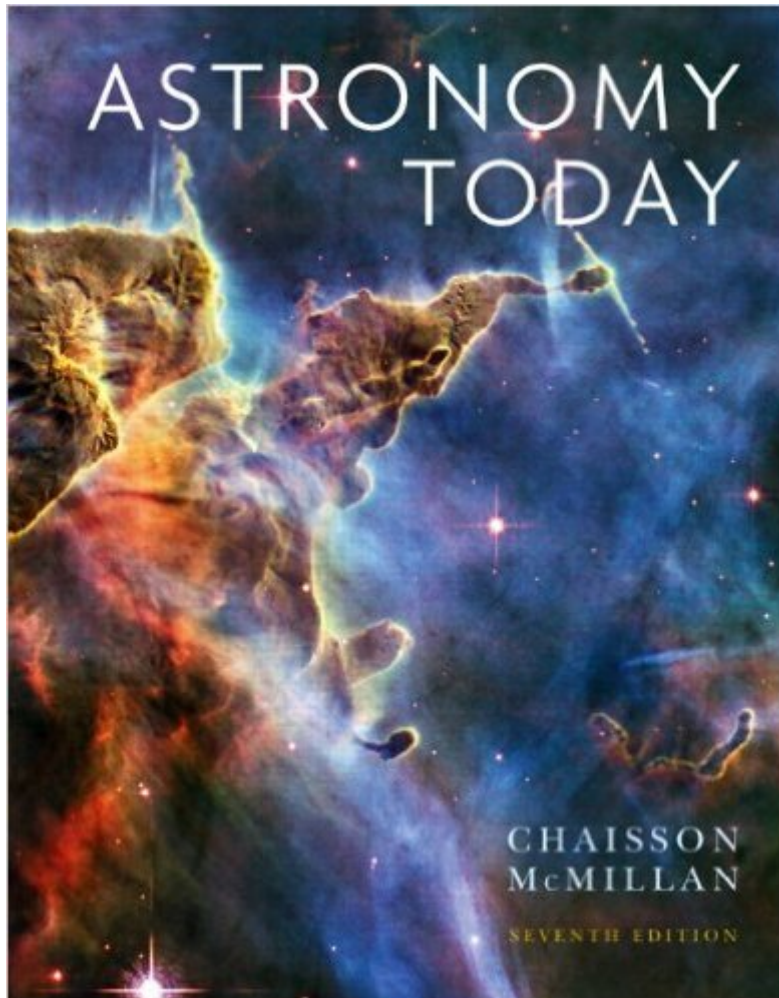


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# Astronomy Today (7th Edition)



## Synopsis

With *Astronomy Today, Seventh Edition*, trusted authors Eric Chaisson and Steve McMillan communicate their excitement about astronomy and awaken you to the universe around you. The text emphasizes critical thinking and visualization, and it focuses on the process of scientific discovery, making "how we know what we know" an integral part of the text. The revised edition has been thoroughly updated with the latest astronomical discoveries and theories, and it has been streamlined to keep you focused on the essentials and to develop an understanding of the "big picture."

Alternate Versions

- Astronomy Today, Volume 1: The Solar System, Seventh Edition* "Focuses primarily on planetary coverage for a 1-term course. Includes Chapters 1-16, 28.
- Astronomy Today, Volume 2: Stars and Galaxies, Seventh Edition* "Focuses primarily on stars and stellar evolution for a 1-term course. Includes Chapters 1-5 and 16-28.

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## Customer Reviews

This book is really outstanding! It contains 757 pages of text (not counting the preface and appendix), about 480 (mostly quite smallish) photos, some 400 drawings/figures/illustrations and almost 50 tables. The writing style is very clear, not at all dry or overtly technical. It is a joy to read this book. I know of no other book that clarifies all kind of astronomical subjects as thoroughly and understandably as this book (and I did read many books on astronomy.....). Highly recommended!

Written for non-science college students, this book is highly recommended for anyone interested in astronomy. Its breath, clarity, superb illustrations and software are first rate. Prentice Hall appears to

have repurposed this text for amateur astronomers in another book, *Astronomy: A Beginner's Guide to the Universe*, which is nearly identical, albeit abbreviated in areas. Both books are an excellent value and users need to decide whether the academic version is worth more. Having read "Astronomy Today" cover to cover, there is much that can be shortened, such as when the authors discuss difficulties encountered in obtaining astronomy knowledge, rather than the knowledge itself. Its generous illustrations reinforce much of the text, taking this philosophy further, it could have been that much of the text could take a back seat to more detailed illustrations. Nevertheless a marvelous job!

Marvin Gozum, MD

I have had a lifetime love of Astronomy but have lacked the mathematical background for a thorough understanding. Most popular books on the subject rarely cover the field in the manner that I desire. *Astronomy Today* is a textbook for a beginning course in astronomy at the college level and does, in fact, cover a great deal of information without the need for mathematical knowledge. The authors express their ideas and information in clear, concise language and clearly manifest an enthusiasm for their subject. I have enjoyed the book immensely.

This book on astronomy is written in an easy-to-read format that keeps the subject from being boring. I bought it for my son, who is a junior in high school and being homeschooled. He really likes the book and is learning well from it. And since he loves math, he is intrigued by its use in this subject. Sometimes he just has to explain to his dad what he's learning and gets into a "teaching mode" and sounds like a professor. I love to see him so thoroughly enjoying learning! As I mentioned, the format is great, and the pictures are terrific and numerous. The writer has a relaxed, yet informative style that keeps you interested. The subject matter is broad; just what I hoped for in a book on astronomy. I paid almost as much on a dvd that was supposed to be enough material for grades 6-12, but was a real disappointment. I cannot recommend this book more highly. The questions at the end of each section are very pertinent and enhance the learning experience. A real plus! Much thanks to Mr. Eric Chaisson for an absolutely tremendous book on astronomy!

This is a textbook, and covers the field very nicely. The organization is from the introduction of Earth, Moon and sky orientation, eclipses, and the like in the first chapter, to covering the Solar System in several chapters, including a chapter devoted to the Earth from a planetary perspective, to examining the life cycle of stars. In my Curriculum, the first part of the book is a 4 hour Planetary course, and the second part is a 4 hour Stellar course. The depth of information presented definitely

calls for the 2 courses. The 28 chapters would be very difficult to cover in a single course. This book seems to be very complete as a source for information about the Universe, but is definitely introductory in nature. A professional Astronomer would find it quite basic.

I purchased this text for our daughter, who is taking an introductory astronomy class. I never had the chance to take such a class myself but always had an interest in astronomy, so I started reading some of the chapters. To my great satisfaction, it was actually very well written, concise, and seemed to be up to date on some of the more interesting and current issues in astronomy- dark matter/energy, inflationary universes, black holes, etc. It has an excellent explanation of black body radiation and how the emission profile of a celestial object gives can disclose both its temperature and much about its composition. It also takes care to show exactly what portion of the light spectrum is used to generate each image (of which there are many beautiful ones included), which really helps understand why optical telescopes can't solve all the scientific mysteries (the center of the Milky Way can't even be seen in the visual spectrum due to dust). It also used a minimal amount of math, which takes away nothing from the points made. As a parent tired of forking over hundreds of dollars for textbooks that unnecessarily change edition every year (how is that possible, I ask?), I did not mind paying for this one. Kudos to the authors for a very readable and useful text. I would recommend this book for anyone who wants to learn about astronomy but never had the opportunity. The only material that I thought might be improved was the section covering the H-R diagrams of star evolution- it would help to have a simple diagram of a typical star as it progresses through the main sequence and beyond, gaining or losing mass. The luminosity and temperature portions of the process are well described, but it's a bit hard to put it all together. Is the H-R diagram really the most useful way to understand star evolution? Regardless, this book rates as an outstanding science textbook in my opinion.

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